اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah 106 – Quraysh

سُوْرَةُ قُرَيْشٍ مَكِّيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate**)**

لِاِيْلٰفِ قُرَيْشٍ ١

(106-1) Since the Quraysh became accustomed, (1)

(1) The word ilaf, as used in the original is from alf which means to be habituated and accustomed to be reunited after breaking up, and to adopt something as a habit. About the lam that is prefixed to ilaf, some Arabists have expressed the opinion that it is to express surprise and wonder. Thus, Li-ilaf-i Quraish-in means: How surprising is the conduct of Quraish! It is only by virtue of Allah’s bounty that they are reunited after their dispersion and have become accustomed to the trade journeys which have brought them their prosperity, and yet from Allah’s worship and service they are turning away. This is the opinion of Akhfash, Kisai and Farra, and holding this opinion as preferable Ibn Jarir writes: When the Arabs mention something after this lam, the same thing itself is regarded as sufficient to show that the attitude and conduct a person has adopted in spite of it, is surprising and amazing. On the contrary, Khalil bin Ahmad, Sibawaih and Zamakhshari say that this is the lam of talil and it relates to the following sentence: Fa-ya budu Rabba hadh al-Bait, which means: Allah’s blessings on the Quraish are countless. But if for no other blessing, they should worship Allah at least for this blessing that by His bounty they became accustomed to the trade journeys, for this by itself is indeed a great favor of Allah to them.

اٖلٰفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَآءِ وَ الصَّيْفِ ٢

(106-2) accustomed to the journey of winter and summer, (2)

(2) That is, the trade journeys. In summer the Quraish travelled northward to Syria and Palestine, for they are cool lands, and in winter southward to Yaman, etc. for they are warm.

فَلْيَعْبُدُوْا رَبَّ هٰذَا الْبَيْتِ ۝٣

(106-3) therefore, let them worship the Lord of this House; (3)

(3) This House: the Holy Kabah. The sentence means that the Quraish have attained to this blessing only by virtue of the House of Allah. They themselves acknowledge that the 360 idols, which they worship, are not its lord, but Allah alone is its Lord. He alone saved them from the invasion of the army of elephants. Him alone they had invoked for help against Abrahah's army. It was His House the keeping of which enhanced their rank and position in Arabia, for before that they were dispersed and commanded no position whatever. Like the common Arab tribes, they too were scattered factions of a race. But when they rallied round this House in Makkah and began to serve it, they became, honorable throughout Arabia, and their trade caravans began to visit every part of the country fearlessly. Therefore, whatever they have achieved, it has been possible only by the help of the Lord of this House; therefore, they should worship Him alone.

الَّذِيْٓ اَطْعَمَهُمْ مِّنْ جُوْعٍ وَّاٰمَنَهُمْ مِّنْ خَوْفٍ ۝٤

(106-4) Who fed them against hunger, (4) and secured them against fear. (5)

(4) The allusion implies that before the Quraish came to Makkah, they were a scattered people in Arabia and living miserable lives. After their gathering together in Makkah they began to prosper, and the Prophet Abraham's (peace be upon him) prayer for them was literally fulfilled when he had prayed: Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in a barren valley near Thy sacred House. Lord, I have done this in the hope that they will establish salat there. So turn the hearts of the people towards them, and provide fruits for their food. (Surah Ibrahim, Ayat 37).

(5) Secure against fear: Secure from the fear from which no one anywhere in Arabia was safe. There was no settlement anywhere in the country the people of which could sleep peacefully at night, for they feared an attack any time from any quarter by some unknown enemy. No one could step out of the bounds of his tribe for fear of life or of being taken prisoner and made a slave. No caravan could travel safely from fear of attack, or without bribing influential chiefs of the tribes on the way for safe conduct. But the Quraish were immune from every danger; they had no fear of an attack from an enemy. Their caravans, small or big, freely passed on the trade routes everywhere in the country. As soon as it became known about a certain caravan that it belonged to the keepers of the Kabah, no one could dare touch it with an evil intention, so much so that even if a single Quraishite was passing on the way, he was allowed to pass unharmed and untouched as soon as the word hara-mi or ana min hara-millah" was heard from him.